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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**California African American Museum Exhibit On Display
In State Capitol During February Lauds California Black Press**

Los Angeles, February 6, 2009--“The Black Press in California” is an intimate exhibit organized by the California African American Museum (CAAM) of Los Angeles. Illustrated with images, political cartoons, newspaper headlines and mastheads, the display focuses on writers and editors and narrates the importance of Black journalists in advancing democracy and the struggle for human rights in the Golden State.

Newspapers always have served to unite and strengthen the African American community. From reports on weddings and funerals; church services to political protests, the Black press connected Blacks with local, regional and national events and with one another. The exhibit is a broad overview of the five W’s and H (who, what, when, where, why and how) of the African American press in California from the 1850s.

In a recent statement, Howard University Journalism Professor Clint C. Wilson, II, said, “African American newspapers have been advocates for social justice and equal rights for all California citizens since the founding of *Mirror of the Times* in San Francisco...It was the first Black newspaper established west of Kansas. Throughout the nearly 155 years of its existence in the Golden State, the Black press has remained true to the slogan that appeared beneath *Mirror of the Times*’ nameplate, “Devoted to Freedom, Morality, Industry and Intelligence.”

Dr. Jane Rhodes, dean for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Macalester College in a 1998 documentary “The Black Press: Soldiers without Swords,” wrote that “The Black press is a

marvelous repository for the history of African Americans...Literally, everything that is representative of African American culture can be found in the Black press.”

The exhibit consists of six horizontal panels that will be displayed outside the Governor’s Suite in California’s State Capitol Building in Sacramento, February 9 through March 5, 2009. Organized by the California African American Museum, the exhibit is co-sponsored by the California Legislative Black Caucus.

The California African American Museum was founded to research, collect, preserve and interpret for public enrichment the history, art and culture of African Americans. According to Charmain Jefferson, executive director of CAAM, “There is almost no better way to chronicle the trials and tribulations of Black Americans, especially during the civil rights era, than to preserve and present the history of the Black Press and we are pleased to do so with this exhibit.”

Chartered by the California State Legislature in 1977, CAAM is a state supported institution and a partner with the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Friends, the Foundation of the California African American Museum. In addition to its permanent collection, CAAM hosts specially borrowed and self-curated exhibitions, free public and school-age education programs and tours CAAM-owned exhibitions throughout California and the nation. CAAM is free and open to the public, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm and Sunday, 11 am to 5 pm.

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